

**Mohamed-Hussein Shubber**



What is the position of the  
Media in Iraq's current  
Political Process?

Magnus Johansson / AFP

**School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London**  
MSc Middle East Politics  
September 2003

**Abstract:**

After the US-led invasion of Iraq, the dictatorial Baath regime of Saddam Hussein has finally withdrawn from the public sphere and it has stopped being in command of the lives of millions of Iraqis. The first sign of a new freedom of expression has been the emergence of new newspapers, radio and television broadcasts in all parts of Iraq, reviving an old passion of Iraqis for the media.

In order to bring a perspective on these dramatic changes, this dissertation addresses the situation and potential role the media in the emergence of an indigenous and stable democratic political system. For this, theories of democratisation, political liberalisation and civil society, as well as the specific situation of the media in the region and in a post-conflict context, will provide a framework to analyse the media in Iraq.

The position and role of the media in Iraq remain conditioned by the larger environment and strategies of most political actors. An examination of the actors present on the new Iraqi media landscape highlights the benefit for the public interest of independent media that is emerging from marginalised civil society movements. Strengthening independent media in the short term appears to be vital for it to have a long-term proactive role in establishing democratic institutions, values and behaviour in Iraq.

**Table of Contents:**

<b>Introduction</b>	4
<b>Chapter one:</b>	
<b>Democracy, Political Liberalisation and Civil Society in Iraq and the Middle East</b>	
<i>Processes of political change: Not all roads lead to democracy...</i>	7
<i>Emerging Civil Society</i>	11
<i>Looking for the Iraqi Civil Society</i>	13
<i>Media: Representing interests</i>	16
<b>Chapter two:</b>	
<b>Media in context: a region and a particular situation in Iraq</b>	
<i>Media in the Middle East: control and hopes for liberalisation</i>	18
<i>“The opinion and the other opinion”</i>	20
<i>Media in Iraq: the legacy of the past</i>	22
<i>The responsibility for the future: media and post-conflict context</i>	24
<b>Chapter three:</b>	
<b>Media in Iraq: actors and challenges for independence</b>	27
<i>The replacement of the State media by the coalition media</i>	28
<i>Actors of Civic Society: investing for future support</i>	30
<i>Civil Society Media: struggling for survival</i>	33
<i>Building an Independent Media in Iraq: a comprehensive approach</i>	36
<b>Conclusion</b>	40
List of abbreviations	43
Bibliography	44

## **What is the Position of the Media in Iraq's current Political Process?**

### **Introduction**

“The nation of Iraq with its proud heritage, abundant resources and skilled and educated people is fully capable of moving toward democracy and living in freedom. The world has a clear interest in the spread of democratic values, because stable and free nations do not breed the ideologies of murder. They encourage the peaceful pursuit of a better life, and there are hopeful signs of the desire for freedom in the Middle East. [...] A liberated Iraq can show the power of freedom to transform this vital region by bringing hope and progress into the lives of millions. America's interest in security and America's belief in liberty both lead in the same direction, to a free and peaceful Iraq.”

US President George W. Bush before the American Enterprise Institute, Washington, 26 February 2003

The promise of democracy, of a better world in which nations interact peacefully, is a dream that US President George W. Bush shares with many people in the world. In view of the events that have occurred in the Middle East in 2003, the US President and his Administration seem to have felt an urgent need and had a special approach for change in the region. From visions of democracy to its real existence, the US government and its allies have undertaken to overthrow a dictatorial regime in Iraq and bring democracy to the country, hoping it will then spread to the region.

The overthrow of the Baath regime as a result of the US-led invasion of Iraq has radically transformed the country. As living conditions remain harsh in Iraq, new liberties and rights help to bring hope for a better future for the people of Iraq. The vacuum after the collapse of the State, the partial takeover by the coalition forces of authority and the emergence of

pluralism have fundamentally changed Iraq's political landscape. However, the confusion of actors and actions overshadows the direction of political change.

Democracy seems to appear like the land the shipwrecked sailor sees from his raft, not knowing if the current will take him to shore or even if this shore is real. Five months after the collapse of the former regime, political participation and representation have not been granted. Chaos rules over any form of law, state violence and murder have been replaced by criminal, political and terrorist violence. All these tragic developments show how immense changes will have to be in order to establish future democratic institutions, values and behaviour in Iraq. No do-it yourself kit exists for democracy. Only a long path with many ambushes and a long blood trail can take Iraqis towards participatory self-rule. It goes without saying that transplants of democracy will irremediably fail if imposed by foreign occupying forces. Therefore, to understand potential changes in Iraq, one needs to focus on internal dynamics, in particular regarding the emergence of new freedoms and their protection.

The aim of this dissertation is to analyse the situation, role and potential of the media in creating an open public sphere and democratic institutions in Iraq. For this, it is important to relate the media to the broader political context of the quest for democratisation and to the relevant actors in Iraq and in the region. The media will be understood throughout this dissertation as comprising television, radio and newspapers which are means of mass communication. Printed and broadcast media in Iraq have flourished since the collapse of the Baath regime. This has been the first sign of the emergence of new liberties and is a path in the apprenticeship of a new freedom. As the authoritarian State has been overthrown, a new room for the Iraqi society is being filled by several groups and individuals who have taken over information flows and the public debate. The civil society of Iraq now has an

opportunity to reorganise and take part in political processes in a way that has been denied to it for many years.

All these recent political developments have not yet been analysed for the potential they have in the establishment of a democratic system in Iraq. In order to bring a perspective on these on-going changes, this dissertation will address, through the example of media, some conditions for the emergence of an indigenous and stable democratic political system. For this, theories of democratisation, political liberalisation and civil society in a post-conflict situation will provide a general framework to analyse the role and impact of the media in Iraq. The issue of the media in the current political context can be seen as a benchmark for the viable establishment of democracy in Iraq. Its role in informing Iraqis and enabling them to take decisions for themselves in a free and open way is a prerequisite to democratisation.

Chapter one focuses on the role of civil society in political liberalisation as a precondition to democracy in Iraq. Chapter two addresses an analysis of the media in the Middle East and in Iraq to highlight its role in creating a public sphere, opening to political liberalisation, and its specific responsibility in peacebuilding. Chapter three reviews comparatively the current media in Iraq and stresses the importance of civil society media for the public interest of the Iraqis.

**Chapter one****Democracy, Political Liberalisation and Civil Society in Iraq and the Middle East**

*Processes of political change: Not all roads lead to democracy...*

“It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion -- that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain -- that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom – and that *government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.*”

Abraham Lincoln, Gettysburg Address, 19 November 1863

Lincoln’s famous address during the American Civil War conceptualised essential features of what is understood by the term “democracy”: participation (by the people), representation (for the people) and popular sovereignty/legitimacy (of the people). The vision Lincoln embraced in these words have gone beyond its context, as democracy has not perished from the earth, far from it. As democratic systems have spread throughout Latin America, Asia, Africa and Eastern Europe, they have enshrined features such as: civil political liberties, free and fair elections, accountability or competition. It is nonetheless difficult to put forward a definitive definition of democracy. The western liberal model is not necessarily the only model as all democracies in the world have emerged within a contingency of historical, socio-economic and political events and processes. We therefore need to understand that democracy is a political system which has institutions and rules, and that it ensures participation, liberties and responsibilities of individuals, electoral procedures and legitimacy. We also need to understand democracy, as a system and as the result of a *process*, a contingency taking place in a specific context at a specific time.

*Democratisation* is a notion that allows us to follow the dynamics and conditions which allow the emergence of a democracy. Brynen, Korany and Noble define democratisation as "*an expansion of political participation that provides citizens with a degree of real and meaningful collective control over public policy*". Numerous problems exist in understanding and achieving democratisation<sup>2</sup>. Firstly, it is not an automatic and easy process of political change, as current political conditions in Iraq illustrate. Secondly, the conditions for its emergence are difficult to identify, as there is no model to follow on how to create and sustain democratic institutions. Democratic developments in India or Chile are very different from the ones in the Middle East. Finally, even once democracy is established in a country, it continues to evolve from within, as the experiences of western countries show. Democratisation can be seen as the final stage of a process of change, but not the only way to move away from an authoritarian political system.

The concept of *political liberalisation* which has been put forward to analyse transitions toward democratisation is a key tool for understanding current political changes in Iraq and the Middle East. It can be defined as *the expansion of the public sphere through the recognition and protection of civil and political rights*<sup>3</sup>. The notion of public sphere<sup>4</sup>, the granting and protection of rights of expression and participation, are essential to understanding transitions away from an authoritarian regime. As the regime or State ends its monopoly or control over the public debate, ideas, participation and dissent can emerge and be spread to a population. Political liberalisation and democratisation are two distinct

---

<sup>1</sup> Brynen, Rex, Korany, Bahgat & Noble, Paul: *Theoretical Perspectives on Arab Liberalization and Democratization*, in Brynen, Korany & Noble (eds): *Political Liberalization & Democratization in the Arab World*, Vol.1, Boulder- London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1995, p.3.

<sup>2</sup> Parry, Geraint & Mooran, Michael (eds): *Introduction*, in *Democracy and Democratization*, London & New York: Routledge, 1994, p.10-11.

<sup>3</sup> Brynen, Rex; Korany, Bahgat & Noble, Paul: *op.cit.*, p.3.

<sup>4</sup> The public sphere according to Habermas is a freely operating and protected zone of public debate. See Sreberny, Annabelle: *Television, gender and democratization in the Middle East*, in Curran, James & Park, Myung-Jin (eds): *De-Westernizing Media Studies*, London & New York: Routledge, 2000, p.63.

processes that can happen separately or in continuity, depending on the context. In the case of Iraq, as no democratic institutions have yet been established, nor have all Iraqis been involved in policy making, we can understand the current changes in the framework of *political liberalisation*. This process is essential to building the foundations of future long-term democratisation.

This is a new situation in the Middle East which is known for its poor record on political participation or respect for human rights<sup>5</sup>. In the last decades, scholars have addressed many different barriers and paths to democracy in the Middle East. Most analyses have focused on the political culture, economic aspects, regional and international dynamics and civil society<sup>6</sup>. Authors like Samuel Huntington (1991) or Bernard Lewis (1958) have claimed that Islamic culture is an obstacle to democracy because of its inclination towards authoritarianism<sup>7</sup>. Less “orientalist” and more subtle authors stress the necessity of understanding the political culture in regional politics and of acknowledging that political culture is not a fixed variable, as it is shaped by context, history and social structures<sup>8</sup>. Diamond, Lind & Lipset (1990) consider that economic modernisation and changing social conditions undermine authoritarian regimes’ control and extraction capacities, thus leading politically to a transition towards democracy<sup>9</sup>. Economic liberalisation has also been seen as an important factor on the potential political liberalisation in the Arab world. However, many authors (Waterbury, Hinnebush, Owen or Ayubi) see in new economic management a way for the regime elites to maintain their power through other means, without granting wider political participation.

---

<sup>5</sup> See for example: *Arab Human Development Report 2002*, United Nations Programme for Development, 2002, <http://www.undp.org/rbas/ahdr/>.

<sup>6</sup> See Ayubi, Nazih: *Over-Stating the Arab State*, London & New York: I.B. Tauris, 1995, p. 396-446 or Owen, Roger: *State, Power and Politics in the Making of the Modern Middle East*, London & New York: Routledge, 2000, p. 147-169

<sup>7</sup> *ibid.* p. 398.

<sup>8</sup> Hudson, Michael C.: *The Political Culture Approach to Arab Democratization*, in Brynen, Korany & Noble (eds): *op.cit.* p.61.

<sup>9</sup> Brynen, Rex, Korany, Bahgat & Noble, Paul: *op.cit.*, p.14.

These analyses have all tried to address sequences of continuous change from structural forces (whether socio-economic, political or cultural) in a situational sequence of events. However, in Iraq, the influence of international and regional politics has had a greater impact on a potential democratisation than the above factors. Most theories have stressed “conditions” and “opportunities” for political liberalisation and democratisation, but none have foreseen the consequences of foreign invasion for democracy. Since the US-led invasion aimed at removing the Baath regime and at establishing democratic institutions in Iraq, theories of transition to democracy focusing on internal processes or external pressures are not fully applicable.

In the case of Iraq, not only has change been brought from outside and by force, but it also offers both *opportunities* and *threats* for the future. For all the prospects of establishing democratic institutions, similar dangers exist of an unstable situation that could bring the country into chaos and away from democracy.

This rupture in the Iraqi political landscape should thus be analysed under a different theoretical framework. This context shows the need to go beyond classical theories of transitions and to focus on an idea of transformation into democracy away from the current instability. The analysis needs to be on the consequences of the arrival of new liberties, bearing in mind the risks they represent. In a context of absence of law and order, the identification of relevant actors and dynamics who seek to shape political conditions, institutions and behaviours for further political liberalisation, is crucial to understanding the potential for democracy.

For that reason, the role of the actors within Iraqi civil society is extremely significant. It is argued that sociological conditions are crucial to evaluating the potential success of democracy. If democracy can be established as an explicit act of political elites, underlying

norms of social behaviour cannot be similarly brought about by law<sup>10</sup>. Therefore, the emergence from the ashes of dictatorship of an Iraqi civil society is a key process for sustaining and expanding the current political liberalisation.

### *Emerging Civil Society*

The concept of civil society has deep roots in political theory, from antiquity to our time. Aristotle, Adam Ferguson, Hegel, de Tocqueville, Marx, Gramsci or Putnam, have all contributed to the understanding of the role of association, group participation, and interest representation in relation to the state-centred political system. The notion has witnessed a renewed interest in the last two decades with the struggle of Latin American and East European societies against authoritarianism. Forces of society outside the classical party and economic elites have emerged to reclaim the space and liberties dictatorships had encroached upon. With these developments, civil society has been seen as a means to revitalise democracy and as a force that can induce change and transition away from dictatorship<sup>11</sup>.

The numerous debates on and the developments of the notion of civil society have not produced a consensus on its definition, validity and scope in the political process. Nonetheless, we can highlight different aspects within which the concept has been structured<sup>12</sup>. Firstly, civil society is understood in an *organisational* way, as structures which channel individual voluntary participation. Secondly, it represents an *arena* of the public space between the individual and the State. Thirdly it is composed of *non-state actors* including political parties, labour unions, community development associations, non-

---

<sup>10</sup> Kaviraj, Sudipta: *In search of civil society*, in Kaviraj, Sudipta & Khilnami, Sunil (eds): *Civil Society: Histories and Possibilities*, Cambridge: CUP, 2001, p.306.

<sup>11</sup> See Glasius Marlies, Kaldor Mary & Anheier, Helmut: *Introducing Global Civil Society*, in Glasius, Kaldor & Anheier (eds): *Global Society Yearbook 2001*, Centre for Civil Society, LSE, <http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/CCS/publications/Default.htm> p.12-17.

<sup>12</sup> *ibid*, p. 28.

governmental organisations and the media. Finally, in terms of *values* and *behaviour*, civil society groups should represent tolerance and a commitment to peaceful management of disputes.

It is important to highlight that civil society is not only understood in a state-society dichotomy, of a classical liberal theory<sup>13</sup>. It is a broad notion encompassing a large variety of *participating* social actors and institutions which *represent* interests in the context of a society and in relation to the State. Therefore, any attempt at describing its position and role need to be put into the context of social-historical forces at work in a specific political system.

The ties between civil society and democracy have been recognised because of their common participatory approach, recognition of rights of expression and association, and the representation of societal interests in relation to state power. For Saad Eddin Ibrahim, these normative components of civil society and democracy are identical, and civil society organs can be the best channels of popular participation in governance<sup>14</sup>.

From these changes in different parts of the world, scholars have focused in the last decade on the role of civil society in the political liberalisation of the Middle East. A consensus exists on the current weakness of civil society in the region, since States make the rules of the game and have not shown a keen interest in political liberalisation and the granting of rights of expression and association. Even if distinctions can be made between different States of

---

<sup>13</sup> Since the 1980's, western politicians, scholars and international institutions have linked civil society with capitalism to address problems of underdevelopment and authoritarianism. This liberal agenda sees civil society within the development agenda, as a means to reducing the role of the State in specific sectors with a focus on the ability of the market to provide public goods, thus creating a stable and prosperous democracy. However this top-down perspective which ties economic and political liberalisation is challenged by many authors and actors for whom civil society can be seen as an actor autonomous from the State and the economy (Gramsci's definition). See Glasius Marlies, Kaldor Mary & Anheier, Helmut: *Introducing Global Civil Society*, *op.cit.*

<sup>14</sup> Ibrahim, Saad Eddin: *Civil Society and prospects for democratization in the Arab World*, in Brynen, Rex, Korany, Bahgat & Noble, Paul: *op.cit.*, p. 29.

the region, the authoritarian nature of many Arab political systems has remained a barrier to a wider expansion of dissent, pluralism and change<sup>15</sup>.

### *Looking for the Iraqi Civil Society*

As in all the countries in the region, the society in Iraq has been transformed by socio-economic and political changes in the last century. Before the British mandate and the Hashemite monarchy, the public space was relatively autonomous from the central authority and was composed of religious notables, bazaar merchants and tribes along occupational, communal or religious lines. With the changes brought about by the establishment of the modern State of Iraq, in the traditional economic and political equilibrium emerged a new force of civil society. With new ideological discourses or new socio-economic categories, Iraqi civil society overcame its traditional divisions and patterns of group participation. Political parties, such as the Iraqi Communist Party or Arab Nationalist Parties, professional associations or labour unions became forces of mobilisation and support before and after the 1958 Revolution, which ended the Monarchy<sup>16</sup>.

The 1968 military coup, which led to the establishment of the Baath party regime in Iraq, transformed the position of civil society. The Baath regime systematically used groups to control and repress Iraqis, removing all autonomy from women's groups, professional associations or tribes<sup>17</sup>. The incorporation of all institutions of civil society into the State

---

<sup>15</sup> See Al-Sayid, Mustapha Kamel: *The concept of Civil Society and the Arab World*, in Brynen, Rex, Korany, Bahgat & Noble, Paul: *op.cit.*, p. 141.

<sup>16</sup> Eric Davis highlights the role of strikes ordered by labour unions in the 1930's or the role of social and intellectual clubs in organising actions against the monarchy and British colonial policies. See Davis, Eric: *Iraq's tradition of tolerance can thrive again*, New York Times, 17 April 2003.

<sup>17</sup> Baram, Amatzia describes very well the use of the tribal loyalties after 1991 by the Baath regime to have power over society through recreated tribal networks and new ideological justifications: See *Neo-Tribalism in Iraq: Saddam Hussein's Tribal Policies 1991-96*, International Journal of Middle East Studies, Vol.1, issue 29, Feb. 1997. For other examples of the disintegration and "baathification" of civil society in Iraq, see Farouk-Sluglett, Marion: *Liberation or Repression? Pan-Arab Nationalism and the Women's Movement in Iraq*, in Hopwood D., Ishow H.& Koszinowski T. (eds): *Iraq: Power and Society*, Oxford: Ithaca Press, 1993.

went alongside with the gradual repression of political opposition and led to what Zubaida called “the authoritarian étatisation of civil society”<sup>18</sup>. For the last thirty-five years, the opportunities to participate in a public dialogue between state and society were channelled for the support of the regime.

Nevertheless, the potential role of civil society in the new Iraq should not be underestimated. Among the first signs of change, after the regime collapsed on the 9<sup>th</sup> of April 2003, was the spontaneous organisation of groups of Iraqis around specific issues. Even in a *Hobbesian* context of insecurity and retreat of the State, signs of an emerging civil society in Iraq have been witnessed. Families of victims of the repression or former political prisoners, such as The Committee for Free Prisoners, took the opportunity to look for their missing ones and to make public the brutal repression they had suffered<sup>19</sup>. The influence of religious leaders in condemning the lootings and calling for the return of stolen goods, or the emergence of new political parties and media in the Iraqi public sphere are all additional signs showing increased public participation in post-Baathist Iraq.

Civil society can be seen as the representation of the composite mosaic of Iraq’s society. At first glance one can distinguish the general actors of Iraqi civil society along both *traditional* and *modern* lines<sup>20</sup>. These lines of division that the world has seen in Iraq between Sunnis,

<sup>18</sup> Zubaida, Sami: *The rise and fall of civil society in Iraq*, [www.opendemocracy.net/debates/article-2-88-953.jsp](http://www.opendemocracy.net/debates/article-2-88-953.jsp), February 2003, p.6.

<sup>19</sup> Lists of missing family members were posted in former jails or security headquarters, demonstrations for the victims of the regime took place and mass graves were uncovered in an effort to denounce the violations of human rights and to document the acts of killing or torture of the Baath regime. See Waleed, M. Rabi’a: *Committee for Free Prisoners Seeks to Help Iraqis Find Missing Relatives*, Al-Muajaha 19 May 2003, <http://www.almuajaha.com/issue1/>

<sup>20</sup> *Traditional* civil society groups, based on identity membership to ethnic, sectarian or communal communities, who are currently the most visible actors can include political or religious parties such as the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP), the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), the Shia Supreme Council for Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI), the Iraqi Turkmen Front or the Council of Iraqi Tribes as well as local associations of Islamic Charity like the Shia Hawza and large tribes (Al-Dulaimi or Al-Juburi).

*Modern* forms of civil society, based on individual voluntary membership regardless of identities, are to be found in secular political parties, human rights groups, women’s associations or media. Parties such as the Iraqi National Congress, the Iraqi Communist Party, the Constitutional Monarchy Movement, professional

Shias, Kurds and others overshadow a more complex social reality of the larger civil society in Iraq. Even if this distinction is relevant for the understanding of the different nature of many groups, it fails to take into account another factor by which civil society groups can further political liberalisation in Iraq.

To address the role of the media in political liberalisation, it is very important to highlight two components of the wider Iraqi civil society<sup>21</sup>. Firstly, the Iraqi *civic society* represents the institutionalised and political part of the wider civil society. It constitutes the fringe of civil society which is closest to the State. Civic society is composed of political parties or religious parties and special interests associations that seek to take control over state policy-making. In a democratic system of election, these actors have strategies for, and interests in, gaining support from society to control public functions. This specific category of participants encompasses traditional religious groups and modern political parties, because they all have interests and strategies to be involved in decision-making and to gain support from the future Iraqi electorate. Due to the lack of pluralism under the Baathist regime, all Iraqi political groups which fit this civic sphere, have now returned to the political scene, and thus are seeking influence, support and mobilisation within the society. In this phase of political liberalisation, all seek to gain for themselves an important place on the scene and shape public opinion to obtain its backing.

Secondly, *civil society*, without civic society, represents the place of association, social integration in which individuals and institutions interact, new identities and lifestyle are formed or maintained. This group, of course, also represents certain interests within a society.

---

associations like the Iraqi Lawyers' association or voluntary groups such as the Committee for Free Prisoners or the national women's conference ("Voice of Iraqi Women") could all be defined along these lines.

<sup>21</sup> Armand Sales (1991) in Ayubi, Nazih: *op.cit.*, p. 439-440.

However, it does not have the same structures, aims and strategies, as actors of civic society. Women's groups, victims of the regime, neighbourhood initiatives, Islamic groups or tribal social structures reflect bottom-up representation interests, but need not be involved in governance. These grassroots movements have an important role to play in changing living conditions for ordinary Iraqis. At a local level, they organise themselves in the vacuum of authority to provide basic security, medical or sustenance needs of communities. The involvement of these groups is essential for a return to normal life. As top-down plans to improve daily life in Iraq are facing multiple challenges, the participation of Iraqis through civil society actors can establish certain values and behaviour that can strengthen liberalisation. These actors can highlight the needs and concerns of average Iraqis, but to be heard, they need to be given a voice that is strong enough to engage in the public sphere.

#### *Media: Representing interests*

The position of the media in civil society is crucial for understanding the processes of political liberalisation and democratisation. An analysis of the media is a window to the analysis of the public sphere, which is a key component of political liberalisation. Where other than in the media can information, ideas and values be publicly debated within a society? In a region like the Middle East where civil society remains weak and home or the mosque are the only places for discussion, communication through media can be an arena of representation in which images, ideas and debates are produced, transmitted and consumed. The vibrancy, intensity and effectiveness of civil society are thus intimately related to the freedom and pluralism of the media. Civil society depends on having people having access to information and channels to voice issues of concern to the public arena<sup>22</sup>. When media

---

<sup>22</sup> Dean, James, Mue, Njonjo and Banda, Fackson: *The Other Information Revolution: Media and Empowerment in Developing Countries*, in Glasius, Kaldor & Anheier (eds): *Global Society Yearbook 2002*, Centre for Civil Society, LSE, <http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/CCS/publications/Default.htm> p. 171.

creates such a public space, it is a strong component of civil society<sup>23</sup>. Therefore, the contribution of the media to national and transnational political liberalisation is not to be underestimated, and might bring about changes in the Middle East.

The media in context of the Iraqi civil society has two features. Firstly, it is a *modern* force of the large civil society furthering collective interests. Technology and distribution networks allow the large scale and speedy channelling of messages, and are used indiscriminately by religious reactionaries, political parties, groups or grassroots movements, according to their needs. Mass communications are essential for civil and civic society groups to publicise their activities, make known their programmes and to provide information flow for their interests. Secondly, the media overlaps with the civic and civil society distinction. The media is a platform that can be used for *public* or *special* interests. If a newspaper or a radio broadcast lacks independence or impartiality, because of political ties, it feeds in a *civic* form of civil society. In this context, it is a means for specific political actors to gain influence and support among citizens, without providing a public service. It serves special interests and thus has a more limited role in sustaining political liberalisation. On the other hand, if the media is used independently of political interests, it can enable people to make decisions in a free way and be a watchdog of powerful actors. Unbiased information allows overcoming manipulation for specific interests and it can contest rumours. Therefore, independent media have more chances of emerging from civil society actors that focus on providing a society with a public good, than from civic society or state actors.

---

<sup>23</sup> Shaw, Martin: *Civil Society and Media in Global Crises*, London: Pinter 1996, p.12.

**Chapter two****Media in context: a region and a particular situation in Iraq**

“We are calling for democracy. We want our voices to go out to the world with no fear. But that is not possible because we are not free. We are not free to move, especially at night.

We are not allowed to film near any U.S. military (just like with Saddam!). Al-Jazeera TV was threatened and accused that they were not showing the right (American) viewpoint, and their live pictures of the war were not true, and so their office got bombed and one of their reporters were murdered because the American government was not pleased with their programs. Is this the new, George Bush democracy?”

Hamsa Mohammed, Iraqi college student at Baghdad University, 14 May 2003

*Media in the region: control and hopes for liberalisation*

The roots of the media in the Arab world in the nineteenth century are to be found in the official government press<sup>24</sup>. With the exception of newspapers in Lebanon or Morocco, the press was mainly a channel for official information and opinions. Historically, the media systems responded and reflected the political, cultural and economic realities of their environment. In periods of instability and tensions before independence, governments or colonial administrations became even more concerned about media influence and control.

In political transitions especially, the press was a vulnerable actor whose independence relied on power relations<sup>25</sup>. After the independence of Arab countries, the new governments increased their influence over the media to minimise dissent, to create unity and to protect national interests when facing real, perceived, internal or external threats. This politisation of the media was also a consequence of their weak economic base. Due to insufficient revenues and sales, opportunities for independence were small, and many newspapers sought financial support from the government or influential economic or political actors.

<sup>24</sup> Rugh, William A.: *The Arab Press*, Syracuse-NY: Syracuse University Press, 1987, p.5-11.

<sup>25</sup> Garon, Lise: *The Press and Democratic Transition in Arab Societies: The Algerian Case*, in Brynen, Rex, Korany, Bahgat & Noble, Paul: *op.cit.*, p.155.

The press, the radio or television were not driving forces towards transition and were deeply affected by prevailing political factors. With the stabilisation of strong military regimes or monarchies in the Middle East, the increased suppression of dissent and the monopoly of regimes over the public sphere, the media became a support tool of the government, promoting particular interests. In this *authoritarian* framework with direct or indirect government control, its role was limited to spreading the official *policy* to the masses. In this region, most countries fit this framework with differences of guidance (nationalisation), loyalty (support from private groups) or diversity (dependent on public space for freedom)<sup>26</sup>.

The lack of independence, criticism or pluralism in the press regime relations, led to an overall scepticism on the part of the Arab audiences towards their national media. The general pattern of media as a State propaganda tool undermined public trust in the Arab media and led to a reliance on foreign media services (such as the Arabic radio programmes of the BBC World Service, Voice of America or Radio Monte-Carlo) or oral communication among families and trusted friends .

The climax of the role of external news coverage and the climax of regional broadcasting underdevelopment in the region was reached during the 1990-91 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and the subsequent Gulf war. At the time, the American news channel Corporation Network News (CNN) was making itself a reputation and the Pentagon was constructing a news agenda benchmark, Arab media, and in particular television, was made aware of the qualitative gap between its poor coverage and the success of alternative western media among Arabs<sup>27</sup>.

The lack of control of national governments over this new form of transnational satellite media provided an incentive to the development of new media in the region. New

---

<sup>26</sup> Rugh, William A.: *op.cit.*, p.25-29.

<sup>27</sup> Sreberny, Annabelle: *op.cit.* p.70.

communication technologies, like Internet or satellite television, were increasing the flow and means of information outside state control in the same way the radio, television or fax machines had done before. Foreseeing the potential end of information monopolies, many Arab governments, like Iraq, banned the use of satellite dishes or controlled access to programmes, and developed their own satellite broadcasting.

Since 1991, many governments or private groups close to regimes have launched their own satellite channels to offer alternatives to Arab audiences<sup>28</sup>. However, the content of these channels, providing more propaganda and entertainment than in-depth coverage of sensitive social or political issues, has not changed the quality of the media in the Middle East.

*“The opinion and the other opinion”*

In 1996, the creation of the Qatar-based channel Al-Jazeera changed the media landscape and brought about a small revolution in the region. Formed by former members of the BBC Arabic News Programme and funded by the Emir of Qatar, this news channel has opened a new era in many countries of the region for independent news coverage and a new sense of freedom<sup>29</sup>. By airing highly controversial political debates (such as Al Ittijah Al Moakis, The Opposite Direction), using a provocative tone and addressing sensitive social, economic and political issues, something unheard of until then, it has successfully attracted the attention of 35 million viewers in the region and in the world<sup>30</sup>. Its attempt to provide an objective, reliable and professional news coverage outside the influence of governments and outside a western cultural framework has won the respect of many media experts<sup>31</sup>.

---

<sup>28</sup> Among which the privately funded Saudi Family Middle Eastern Broadcasting Centre (MBC) based in London, the Lebanese Future TV (owned by Mr Hariri, Prime Minister of Lebanon) or the government run Egyptian Satellite Channel (ESC) or Emirates Dubai Television (EDTV).

<sup>29</sup> See El-Nawawy, Mohammed & Iskandar, Adel: *Al-Jazeera*, Cambridge MA: Westview, 2002.

<sup>30</sup> New York Times: *Why Al-Jazeera matters*, 31 March 2003.

<sup>31</sup> Al-Jazeera was given an Award for Best Circumvention of Censorship, by Index on Censorship in March 2003, see: *Free speaking voices in the wilderness*, [http://www.indexonline.org/awards\\_2003.shtml](http://www.indexonline.org/awards_2003.shtml).

Since 2001, Al-Jazeera has been recognised by western media and policy makers as an important actor of the world media landscape. Many western politicians and Arab leaders have accused the channel of furthering dissent, conspiracy, disinformation or supporting terrorism and violence, in reaction to its independence and in order to undermine its credibility<sup>32</sup>. Its outspoken opponents have criticised its biased and shallow news coverage<sup>33</sup>.

However, the points on the side of Al-Jazeera are significant to the role that the independent media can play in political liberalisation. Firstly, Al-Jazeera has the chance, unlike many media in the region, of being politically independent from governments, even if it remains partly tied to Qatari funding<sup>34</sup>. This broad independence is a sign of quality and can open a door for many changes in the international, regional and national public spheres. Secondly, Al-Jazeera offers an alternative to government-run media in the region and the predominance of western networks in the world. As it claims, Al-Jazeera offers “the opinion and the other opinion”. This offer of diversity might not build consensus, nevertheless it has the advantage of bringing pluralism into the media scene. Thirdly, the commitments of the channel to professional journalistic standards may be uneven at times, but bring credibility and build a new sense of confidence from the Arab public, whose confidence in government-provided news coverage has been eroded for a long time. These developments bear the seeds of political liberalisation through technology (satellite networks) which undermine the potential

<sup>32</sup> It is for example peculiar to find out that British Home Secretary David Blunkett condemned Al-Jazeera’s news coverage of the 2003 War in Iraq, while that same day the Iraqi Baath government was expelling Al-Jazeera’s team in Baghdad because of its independence. Jayasekera, Rohan: *Iraq: Al-Jazeera and free expression. Shooting the messenger*, Index on Censorship, 3 April 2003, <http://foi.missouri.edu/jourwarcoverage/iraqaljazeera.html>.

<sup>33</sup> The first argument relies on the journalistic standards of Al-Jazeera, which is to rely on both sides of a story while retaining values, beliefs and feelings of the targeted audience. This so-called bias is a contextual objectivity and it could be applied to most media in the world. Secondly, a case can be made for the lack of investigational journalism, documentaries or failure to address issues such as money and arms sales in the region. See Khouri, Rami G.: *Madonna meets Osama: New Arab Media and its Discontents*, 6 December 2002, Global Vision Network/Pacific News Service, [www.gvnews.net/html/Opinion/alert789.html](http://www.gvnews.net/html/Opinion/alert789.html).

<sup>34</sup> This independence can be fragile as Al-Jazeera has been accused of collusion by some of its staff with Iraqi intelligence services of the Baath regime. See Deans, Jason: *Al-Jazeera's chief executive steps down*, The Guardian: Special Reports, 27 May 2003, <http://media.guardian.co.uk/tvnewsbattleofthebulletins/story/0,7521,964362,00.html>.

control of governments and thus make accessible to a transnational public new forms of information and debates. The space opened will be hard to close again and could trigger similar developments in countries facing political openness, as Iraq is.

### *Media in Iraq: the legacy of the past*

In a country where writing was first invented 5,000 years ago and where the first Arabic newspaper (Al Zawra) was published 135 years ago, one could have high expectations about the status of the media. However, the legacy of the Baathist years has overshadowed the achievements of the media in Iraq before 1968.

Under the monarchy, the Iraqi Press and Radio (State television came to Iraq in 1956) filled the Iraqis' immense appetite for news, literature and political debate<sup>35</sup>. Before the overthrow of the Hashemite monarchy in 1958, the Iraqi press was fresh and vocal. Satirical newspapers, such as *Habez Bouz*, political parties' newspapers printed and distributed clandestinely, as the Communist daily *Ittihad Al-Shaab* (Way of the people) or the Baathist *Al-Thawra* (the Revolution) played an active role in the intellectual and ideological emulation of that time. However, due to the increasing political instability and confrontation during the years of military regimes, the press became more controlled, paying the price of freedom through political allegiance<sup>36</sup>.

With the 1968 coup that established the Baathist regime, increased pressure was put on the press in an effort to eliminate dissent and opposition to the regime. By 1979, date of the takeover of the regime by Saddam Hussein, only pro-Baathist newspapers remained available to the public. The repression and submission of journalists, through the Ministry of Information and the security services, allowed the regime to have total government control

---

<sup>35</sup> The saying goes: "What is written in Cairo is printed in Beirut but read in Baghdad".

<sup>36</sup> Cazes, Séverine: *The Iraqi Media: 25 years of relentless repression*, Reporters without Borders Report, February 2003, [www.rsf.org](http://www.rsf.org), p.4.

over the media, which became an instrument of support for the regime and personal glorification of the President<sup>37</sup>. This zero tolerance level for criticism illustrated the total absence of freedom of expression within Iraqi society<sup>38</sup>.

In 1992, the late Uday Hussein became “dean of the journalists union” and was active in diversifying, modernising and reviving the state-run publications, radio and television channels, among which were the popular magazines *Babil* or *Nab Al-Shabab* (the weekly paper of the Youth Union). With a label of “independence”, some of these newspapers and broadcasts were used to attack opponents of the regime without the mark of official government media. However, Uday went too far in using the media as a platform for his personal dissent from within the system, and, by 1998, a crackdown on these media was ordered by his father Saddam<sup>39</sup>.

At the same time, with the withdrawal of the regime from Kurdistan in 1991, a new press flourished in the autonomous zones controlled by the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP) and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK). Numerous newspapers, radio, television and satellite channels have opened a free space in these regions in the last decade, reporting in Kurdish, Arabic or English, local, regional and international topics. However, the lack of control from the regime in Baghdad has not brought about independent journalism. The Kurdish media remains affected and controlled by the two main Kurdish factions and influenced by the traditional lack of internal or leadership criticisms<sup>40</sup>.

---

<sup>37</sup> *A New Voice in the Middle East: A Provisional Needs Assessment for the Iraqi Media*, Joint Report by the Baltic Media Centre, Index on Censorship, Institute for War & Peace Reporting (IPWR) & International Media Support, May-June 2003, [www.i-m-s.dk](http://www.i-m-s.dk), p.4.

<sup>38</sup> In 1986, The Revolutionary Command Council passed an order (No 840) imposing the death penalty on any critic of the regime. See Cazes, Séverine, *op.cit.*, p.5.

<sup>39</sup> Dargahi, Borzou: *Rebuilding Iraq's Media*, Columbia Journalism Review, July/August 2003, <http://www.cjr.org/year/03/4/daragahi.asp>, p.3.

<sup>40</sup> *A New Voice in the Middle East: A Provisional Needs Assessment for the Iraqi Media*, *op.cit.*, p.5.

*The responsibility for the future: media and post-conflict context*

The New Iraq opens new hopes for fundamental changes for the media in Iraq. The emergence of hundreds of newspapers in city centres, as well as new radio and television broadcasts immediately after the retreat of the Baath regime, have brought new liberties, but many challenges are still to be faced. A view of the current environment is crucial in identifying future roles and opportunities for the media.

The international aspects of the 2003 war in Iraq coexist with daily internal violence, and can deeply affect future political developments. Overall, we can understand the situation as one of *post-conflict* with on-going violence. This situation is characterised as a foreign occupation and administration of the country, widespread criminal activities, attacks against coalition forces and bombings. Therefore the short term situation for the New Iraq is one of addressing security, re-establishing law and order and providing basic services to the population (water, electricity and food supplies). In the medium term, increased authority and powers of the new Iraqi government, reconstruction of the economy and increased popular participation in the political process could further the long term aims of elections and democracy, economic development and self determination.

The role of the media in similar situations in the Balkans, Rwanda, East-Timor or Afghanistan has received increased attention in the last decade from government agencies, international relief and development organisations, scholars, human rights groups and journalists. The main impulse has come from the idea that providing accurate and balanced information is a major step towards peace<sup>41</sup>. The specific role and influence of the media has been addressed in conflict prevention, open conflict and peacebuilding periods, but to be

---

<sup>41</sup> Havermans, Jos: *Better Media, Less Conflict*, Conflict Prevention Newsletter, Vol.1. No2, 1998, p.5.

relevant to our study of Iraq we must focus only on the post-conflict situation<sup>42</sup>. The main focus on the post-conflict context separates the short-medium term aims and strategies from the long term ones and is relevant to the situation in Iraq.

In the short term, media is seen to have a role in first being a provider of non-partisan information and analysis on the conflict and its background, and secondly as a means to prepare for sound long term media developments<sup>43</sup>. The first role encompasses the need for the media to be an *independent* actor, committed to *impartiality* and *accuracy* to ensure or achieve peacebuilding<sup>44</sup>. Accuracy can be achieved by adopting journalistic standards of reporting through professional training, and by complying with codes of conduct. Impartiality, through balanced reporting and objectivity, is a way of undermining further divisions in a society trying to overcome a conflict situation. Independence is a crucial quality of the media, which otherwise may be biased to serve powerful interests. When the media has these qualities, it can be a constructive force for peace. The public sphere needs to be filled by actors and ideas strengthening the public interest, because sensationalism and partisanship can deliver profit and support only at the price of peacebuilding<sup>45</sup>. Diversity, reliability and independence of the media allow well informed citizens to take decisions, to use their rights to freedom of expression, to debate and to vote freely. In a context like the New Iraq, journalists and media professionals thus bear a *social responsibility* towards the public to go beyond basic reporting, and investigate, explain and analyse conflict resolution issues such as the causes of the war, the intent of the actors, peace and reconciliation institutions, the

---

<sup>42</sup> See Howard, Ross: *An Operational Framework for Media and Peacebuilding*, Vancouver: Institute for Media, Policy and Civil Society, 2002, [www.impacs.org](http://www.impacs.org).

<sup>43</sup> Spurk, Christoph: *Media and Peacebuilding: Actors, Concepts and Challenges*, swisspeace, 2002, [www.swisspeace.org](http://www.swisspeace.org), p.6-7.

<sup>44</sup> Howard, Ross: *The Media's role in war and Peacebuilding*, paper presented at a Seminar organised by the Working Group on Civil Society and the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, 2003, [www.impacs.org](http://www.impacs.org), p.1.

<sup>45</sup> *ibid.*, p.2.

discrediting of rumours or hate speeches. The media can enlighten a population which has lived under censorship; it can correct misperceptions, identify underlying interests and thus enables consensus building over competition and conflict<sup>46</sup>.

The second aspect of media development is the coherence of short-term and long-term perspectives. Free, pluralistic and independent media is an intermediate result that serves the final objective of a functioning stable democracy with a politically active civil society<sup>47</sup>. The ties between a sustained political liberalisation, democratisation, media and civil society are linked together. The media in the long term can provide *free information flows* and a *watchdog* function. Free flows of information through diverse media reflect competing opinions and interests within civil and civic society and enable the future voter to make well-informed choices. As a watchdog, the media becomes not simply an indicator of political liberalisation and democratisation but an actor<sup>48</sup>. However the proactive role of the media is dependent on independent regulators, protective laws or appeal courts to denounce power abuses or attempts at censorship. Without a favourable climate, accuracy, impartiality and independence can be sacrificed for self-censorship and safety.

The long-term challenges of the media are thus connected to its short-term evolution and also to wider political and economic processes. Even if the media achieves its short-term objectives, its environment will condition its role and survival. Without wider political liberalisation or economic development, the obstacles to the survival of the media will grow and lead to further influence and control, less independence and a reduced foundation for establishing democratic institutions.

---

<sup>46</sup> *ibid.*, p.7.

<sup>47</sup> Spurr, Christoph: *op.cit.*, p.12.

<sup>48</sup> Howard, Ross: *op.cit.*, 2003, p.9.

## **Chapter three**

### **Media in Iraq: actors and challenges for independence**

"When I see Bremer walking around shaking people's hands on the television, I think of Saddam. What has changed?"

Rima Kadri, homemaker, Baghdad, 18 August 2003

In the New Iraq, scores of newspapers are on the streets of Baghdad, Mosul, Basra and Najaf, television and radio broadcasts are put together, all demonstrating a new freedom of expression. After decades of controlled consent-producing media, Iraqis seem to be taking over from the Baath regime in spreading information and speaking their minds. The frenzy and energy put into the media highlight the need to compensate for the frustrations of the past in order to build a future. Freedom of expression is now a sign of liberty and participation and it is a cornerstone to assess the potential of liberalisation and democratisation. The most visible signs of media activity in Iraq have been the end of state broadcasts and news reports, new newspapers and local radio and television broadcasts. With over a hundred newspapers in the streets of Baghdad, a similar number in Basra and proportionally as many in smaller towns, the press is the most active actor of the Iraqi media scene.

The quantity of media outlets, publications or broadcast shows the diversity, crucial to the public interest, but is unfortunately not useful to a deep understanding of the role and potential of media in Iraq's liberalisation. The *quality* of the media is more relevant to see the roots of democratisation. Therefore, we need to distinguish the actors behind the media, their strategies and the interests they represent. The three main actors are the *occupying* forces, groups of *civic society* and those of *civil society*. Secondly, within each section one needs to see if some of these media serve private or public interests and bear a *social responsibility* essential to the public sphere. The presence or absence of accuracy, impartiality and most

importantly independence can measure the potential for the emerging Iraqi media to be a force of a future Iraqi democracy.

### *The replacement of the State media by the coalition media*

In the past thirty-five years, even if the Iraqi media remained under the control of the government and no foreign newspapers or magazines were allowed in the country, outside radio (and a very limited number of television) broadcasts could be received in the country. Radio broadcasts from the BBC World Service, Voice of America or Radio Monte Carlo were very popular and more trusted for news coverage than the state-run media.

In March 2002, the US government replaced its Voice of America's Arabic service with Radio Sawa (Together) which broadcasts AM/FM music and cultural programmes for youth and whose main audience target was the Iraqi people.

The second step of the US media operation in Iraq has been the establishment of an Iraqi Media Network (IMN) to counter the Baathist propaganda machine during the war, and after the withdrawal of the regime to provide one new TV station, one new radio broadcast, two newspapers (Al-Sabah and Sumer) and to reconstruct the infrastructure. Scientific Applications International Corp. (SAIC), an American company specialised in military and defence contracts, has been funded by the Pentagon (20 million dollars for 4 months) to provide IMN with the necessary transmitting infrastructure for a team of formerly exiled Iraqis and newly recruited local journalists<sup>49</sup>. The objectives of the IMN have however been shifting from providing independent news and entertainment to using the IMN as a tool to “shape” Iraqi perception of the occupying coalition<sup>50</sup>. Additionally, the balance between

---

<sup>49</sup> Oppel, Richard A. Jr.: *Iraqis get the news but often don't believe it*, New York Times, 5 August 2003.

<sup>50</sup> According to Michael Knights, a fellow at The Washington Institute, this strategy is vital “to balance indigenous and Iranian influences”. This position is held in the light of the success of the Iranian Al-Aram Arabic Television broadcast which has been launched just before the war and is very popular in the south of Iraq. See *The role of broadcast media in media in influence operations in Iraq*, Policywatch No. 758, 19 May 2003.

providing technical means to an independent network and involvement in broadcasting under the control of the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) has shifted to the former solution.

An example of the wider US action in Iraq after the collapse of the Baath regime, is that no coherent strategy has been put forward for indigenous media, even in the presence of significant funding. Surprisingly, the achievements of the IMN have been extremely limited<sup>51</sup>. It has created a lot of tension with the CPA, which has taken control of the IMN, more tension with the 350 Iraqi local staff, who went on strike because they were not paid for 35 days, and with the Swedish born Iraqi director of the IMN, Ahmed Al-Rikabi who has resigned in protest at the limited resources of the IMN<sup>52</sup>. Additionally, Iraqis are sceptical of the programmes, because they are seen as the voice of the occupying forces and also because of their dullness and repetitiveness<sup>53</sup>.

After the closure by the CPA of the Ministry of Information, the IMN was to become an independent network breaking the long standing tradition of state propaganda. However, due to the inconsistencies of and rivalries between senior US officials on the ground and the control of the IMN and its programmes by the CPA<sup>54</sup>, the IMN has become a new ministry of information for the occupying forces and it is distrusted by Iraqis. Furthermore, the IMN-CPA relationship undermines the development of independent media structures and regulations in the long run. A conflict of interests may arise if the broadcasting regulating body and the authority's public information service are the same institution. Not only is this body the mouthpiece of the authority in power, but it is also the largest media corporation

---

<sup>51</sup> See BBC World Service Trust: *The Current State of the Broadcast Media in Iraq*, Media Audit, April-June 2003, p.3:6;12.

<sup>52</sup> See Claude Patrice : *En pleine reconstruction, les médias publics irakiens souffrent de la faiblesse de leurs moyens*, Le Monde, 10 July 2003.

<sup>53</sup> Opiel, Richard A. Jr., *op.cit.*

<sup>54</sup> US senior officials have told IMN managers to drop reading verses of the Koran from the programmes or asking for the removal of street interviews because of their anti-American tone. See Jayasekera, Rohan: *Iraq: US military and free speech*, Index on Censorship, 11 June 2003, [http://www.indexonline.org/news/20030611\\_iraq.shtml](http://www.indexonline.org/news/20030611_iraq.shtml).

with the largest budget. Under the current lack of a legal framework, it can be its own regulator, its own controller, it can regulate what its competitors can do, and use the power of the authorities (the military for the moment) to implement its decisions and regulations. Instead of opening a dialogue with Iraqi society through the media, the CPA is undermining its own credibility and calls have been made for the IMN project to be stopped<sup>55</sup>.

*Actors of civic society: investing for future support*

In the New Iraq, most of the new media are the voices of political, tribal or religious groups who are financing newspapers, radio and a few television broadcasts. Around ninety percent of the media scene is organised around these groups as a means of publicising their position, gaining influence and support. All have invested consequent financial means to develop media outlets and strategies, for specific aims different from income generating activities.

Within this wide category of actors, one can first identify the “internationals”, or exiled Iraqis, who have recently returned to the country and are seeking attention, using newspapers or radio to gain an audience, future support and as a platform for their political agenda. They include Ahmed Chalabi’s Iraqi National Council’s Newspaper Al-Mutamar (Congress) or Radio Hurriah (Freedom) or the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI)’s paper Al-Adala (Justice). Contrary to many expectations, these media outlets have not been the most successful and remain marginal in the new Iraqi media<sup>56</sup>.

The most successful newspapers for the moment have emerged from a second category of individuals or groups that have had a platform in and out of Iraq during the Saddam years. The most popular newspaper in Iraq, Al-Zamman (The Time, 50,000 printed copies daily), belongs to Saad Al-Bazzaz, a former editor in-chief of the state-owned Al-Jumhuriya (Republic), who left Iraq in 1992 and who has since published Al-Zamman from London,

---

<sup>55</sup> BBC World Service Trust: *op.cit.*, p.12.

<sup>56</sup> Jayasekera, Rohan, Interview, 15 August 2003.

while keeping some business activities in Iraq<sup>57</sup>. The other two major newspapers are Kurdish newspapers published in Arabic, both with 30,000 to 50,000 printed copies: Al-Ittihad (Union) and Al-Taakhi (Brotherhood). Respectively, these papers belong to Jalal Talabani's PUK and Massoud Barzani's KDP and have benefited from the freedom enjoyed by the Kurdish areas of Iraq since 1991, and thus gained a very useful experience for being produced at the national level.

Finally, local religious and political groups such as the Shia Al-Dawa or the Iraqi Communist Party also have their own newspaper and radio station. However, like most exiled Iraqis, they also remain minor media actors with printing of 5,000 copies a day or a week<sup>58</sup>.

The success of newspapers seems to reside in their appealing format with colour pictures, their entertainment potential and also reasonable writing standards. For radio broadcasts, entertainment and the music aired are seen to be criteria for success, more than ownership or political stance. In terms of content, newspapers or radio broadcasts have many similarities featuring news bulletins on politics and current affairs, entertainment and sport. They all have a relatively moderate tone regarding the occupation by the US-led forces, either supporting a pro-US position or a critical one, but never preaching violence. They all have fairly true information but fail to distinguish clearly news coverage from opinions. Generally they meet the criteria of impartiality and accuracy.

We can understand that, in the short term, these *interest-based* media seek to gain an audience without revealing their full political agenda. Their underlying tone can be felt, whether pro-American, or pro-Sunni, but each one seems to keep its agenda quiet, waiting for election times or wider opportunities for their participation in decision-making roles.

---

<sup>57</sup> Jayasekera, Rohan: *Struggling for Independent Media in Occupied Iraq*, 30 May 2003, Index on Censorship, <http://www.citizenlab.org/modules.php?op=modload&name=News&file=article&sid=297>.

<sup>58</sup> See Whitaker, Brian: *Getting a bad press*, The Guardian, 23 June 2003.

Therefore, even if the Iraqi media scene is diverse, its main components are extremely politicised, and each one seeks to shape opinion in its favour to gain in the long run a greater role in the political landscape, and to use its audience for support. The quasi monopoly of civic society actors overshadows the lack of participation on the part of the wider Iraqi civil society. The defence of the public interest is not at the centre of the concerns of civic society actors or of the occupying forces. Each of these, instead of sticking to norms of accuracy, impartiality and independence use the media to target specific groups and gain influence according to an identity, an ideology, political programmes or popular concerns.

Rival political interests, seeking to position themselves using partisan media, could be a destabilising factor in the fragile post-conflict context of Iraq<sup>59</sup>. Firstly, Iraqis still distrust and do not find most newspapers or IMN programmes credible. Only major newspapers such as Al-Zamman, or international satellite channels, seem to inspire confidence to Iraqis who have known propaganda for most of their lives<sup>60</sup>. Therefore, one can have serious doubts as to the benefits to the public interest of the current media boom. It seems that quantity should be strengthened by quality, to change the political culture and to improve the debate in the national public sphere

Secondly, journalists seem to be afraid of expressing themselves fully or of handling news their own way. Because of the lack of independence of many newspapers serving as party organs, and of traditional lack of internal leadership criticism, many journalists self-censor themselves to prevent reprisals from within a party, from other political parties, from their supporters and even from former Baath party members<sup>61</sup>. The ties between parties and the media clearly undermine the potential for independence. In the short term as well as in the

---

<sup>59</sup> *A New Voice in the Middle East: A Provisional Needs Assessment for the Iraqi Media*, op.cit., p.1.

<sup>60</sup> Reporters Without Borders: *The Iraqi media, three month after the war*, 22 July 2003, [http://www.rsf.org/article.php3?id\\_article=7583](http://www.rsf.org/article.php3?id_article=7583), p.3.

<sup>61</sup> *ibid.*, p.6.

long term, the independence of the media is crucial for sound political debate, an open public sphere, political liberalisation and democracy. Without the emergence and the protection of rights of free expression, no political liberalisation can be sustained in Iraq. Independence is necessary in short term peace-building efforts, it is vital in the middle-run to prevent more violent conflicts based on partisanship within the Iraqi society, and in the long term it is essential in creating a basis for an indigenous democracy.

Thirdly, the condition of the media in Iraq and its evolution are dependent on wider pacification, the establishment of a legitimate and effective Iraqi authority, as well as on economic development. The current problems of security, lack of employment and lack of basic services undermine a sustained development of the media, of the public sphere and thus of liberalisation. If the situation in the country were to evolve from post-conflict to continuous violence, the media would be directly affected and could become a tool for further divisions.

#### *Civil Society Media: struggling for survival*

Even if non-political actors are marginal in the new Iraqi media environment, their role seems to be essential in the short and long term political liberalisation process. It seems that the first signs of genuine independent media have emerged from inside Iraq, and are trying to reach out to other Iraqis and the world. Local grassroots movements have as an essential characteristic their *independent* use of media for information, education or entertainment. On a very small scale and at a local level, some individuals have gathered around the production of newspapers, radio and television broadcasts to benefit the public interest and not for a specific political agenda.

In the television sector, some local associations seem to have been successful in finding equipment and starting their own broadcast with some financial help from the US army. For

example Mosul TV, which was the first television broadcaster after the fall of the regime, broadcasts local news bulletins, interviews and Al-Jazeera news programmes and talk shows. However, after encouraging this independent broadcast, the 101st Division commander, Maj. Gen. David H. Petraeus, wanted to have editorial control and to integrate the channel to the IMN, because of its “non factual and unbalanced news coverage”<sup>62</sup>. Najaf TV, which programmes a daily news bulletin, satellite re-broadcasting of children’s cartoons, Al-Jazeera, Al-Manar (Lebanese Hezbollah’s TV station), Koran and poetry readings, is another example of local television set up by local individuals and put under pressure by the CPA to be part of the IMN<sup>63</sup>. Even if such projects carry some influence, whether Islamic with Najaf TV, or by local personalities in Mosul, they represent alternative sources of information for local communities, who may trust these sources more than the media platforms of political parties. Diversity in the media is crucial to an open public debate and the potential success or failure of these channels should come from public support or lack of interest, not from authoritarian support or control. Local initiatives, if they meet community needs and expectations about programmes, can be strengthened and can gain or lose an audience. If they pass these critical market tests, they can be strong public actors serving the public interest that is essential in the New Iraq.

Another example of a grassroots movement can be seen in a Baghdadi newspaper called Al-Muajaha (Confrontation). Its team is made up of young university and high school students who are not affiliated to political parties and who come from different backgrounds<sup>64</sup>. Their Arabic-English weekly newspaper coverage (printing an average of 3,000 copies) consists of critics of the frustrations of daily life under occupation, of memories of the years of oppression, of a religious page open to all confessions and of satirical cartoons. The activism

---

<sup>62</sup> Pincus, Walter: *US General May Censor Iraqi TV Station's Programs*, Washington Post, 9 May 2003.

<sup>63</sup> BBC World Service Trust: *op.cit.*, p.10.

<sup>64</sup> See Goldberg, Michelle: *Baghdad Chronicles*, Salon, 24 May 2003, [http://www.salon.com/news/feature/2003/05/24/iraq\\_news/print.html](http://www.salon.com/news/feature/2003/05/24/iraq_news/print.html).

and limited financial support of a western independent media network (Indymedia) and of an American NGO (Voices in the Wilderness) present in Iraq, have kept Al-Muajaha alive. By raising funds outside Iraq and providing technical support, including a website, these western NGOs have until now allowed Al-Muajaha to sustain its activities without losing independence<sup>65</sup>.

The content of the newspaper, whether offering a platform to neophyte journalists or denouncing coalition human rights abuses<sup>66</sup> and the militarisation of political parties<sup>67</sup>, shows a proactive attempt at providing the Iraqi public with accurate and impartial information and reporting. This kind of dynamic fits into the positive role civil society media can play in post-conflict reconstruction. It provides an inclusive discourse to all Iraqis, rather than targeting a specific audience to gain support and influence through divisions. Other newspapers, such as the weekly Iraq Al-Youm (Iraq Today, printing 5,000 copies) whose editor is a young woman, bear the same potential of independence and the same burdens<sup>68</sup>. With improving material conditions and professional standards, these groups could be examples of effective grassroots initiatives of civil society, leading to political liberalisation which in the long term might be more successful in bringing democracy than top-down projects of parties or the authorities in power.

All these forms of grassroots media have to face the same two challenges: Firstly, they have to face an environment which prevents usual advertising or sales revenues from being sufficient to support their media. Voluntary work or private funds can be an alternative before

---

<sup>65</sup> The ties between these actors of different national civil societies gathering around common interests and building transnational solidarities are concrete examples of the participation of civil society in globalisation, and are often called *global* or *transnational civil society*. See Shaw, Martin: *op.cit.*, p.14.

<sup>66</sup> See for example the very disturbing account of a prisoner in Um Qasr in Jarrar, Majid: *You should thank us for keeping you alive*, 19 May 2003, [www.almujaha.com](http://www.almujaha.com), see also Amnesty International: *Iraq: Memorandum on concerns relating to law and order*, 23 July 2003, <http://web.amnesty.org/library/Index/ENGMDE141572003>.

<sup>67</sup> Jarrar, Majid: *Every Man a Sheikh - Inside the FIF & INC*, 1 June 2003, [www.almujaha.com](http://www.almujaha.com).

<sup>68</sup> Jayasekera, Rohan: *op.cit.*, 30 May 2003.

the economy functions again, but in the long term they cannot survive until they generate a sufficient form of income or have financial support. The lack of electricity, of security, of legal protection and enforcement, in addition to the devastated state of the economy, make the task of these actors of civil society much harder because of their choice not to ally themselves to powerful groups. Thus, the second problem for civil society is to keep independent when the temptation to come under the wing of a rich and powerful interest group is strong. Potential media patrons, religious groups or the government, can offer financial help but at the price of independence. The pressures faced by Mosul and Najaf televisions from the US military and the CPA highlight the ambiguities of support and independence and the risks of alienation.

To meet both challenges, civil society actors have two possibilities. Firstly, in the prospect of an improvement of the security, the political and the economic environment, independent media could become a relevant actor for political liberalisation if business strategies allow the media to become self-sustaining through advertising revenues and sales. In such a case however, the media would not be a proactive actor of the public sphere, but would adapt to market evolution and audience choices. A second solution, if no general improvement were to be seen in Iraq, would be to grant these forms of media international aid by NGOs or institutional donors. Voluntary work and financial help from international actors can be short to medium term solutions and have a positive impact on pacifying the country and overcoming divisions in Iraqi society.

#### *Building an Independent Media in Iraq: a comprehensive approach*

To meet the needs of creating free information flows and a media that works as a watchdog, bottom-up developments have to be strengthened by an adequate environment, strategies and

legal/organisational frameworks. After the previous overview of the media landscape in Iraq, it is clear that the conditions and needs for the emergence of an independent media in the long term, as an important actor of political liberalisation, are at several levels.

Firstly, the authorities in place, mainly the CPA, the newly-formed Iraqi government and the occupying military forces have to create the necessary security conditions for a return to a normal life *environment*. This includes targeting small and organised criminals, securing water, electricity, or petrol distribution channels, patrolling streets besides searching for Saddam thugs and international terrorists<sup>69</sup>. Once these first concerns have been addressed, development work and resumed commercial activities will create an environment in which media will be able to survive according to market and audience rules. Profit-making strategies will allow for the survival of the most successful newspapers and other forms of media, while political use of the media might become too expensive. In the very long term, even civic society media could stop furthering specific interests to widen their audience and thus increase their income.

Secondly, a consistent and credible *media strategy* should emerge from the CPA. The appointment of Simon Haselock, a former UN media supervisor in Kosovo, as media commissioner, seems to reveal a change of approach. Further to the problems with the IMN that have previously been mentioned, an urgent need for change has been felt. All NGOs and individuals involved in the process in Iraq lobby to separate the CPA public information and the regulatory functions of the IMN. Rohan Jayasekera from Index on Censorship believes that a transformation of the IMN operation is still possible if its role is limited to the development of transmission facilities for television and radio broadcasts<sup>70</sup>. Additionally, an

<sup>69</sup> For more plans and ideas on how to improve the situation in Iraq, see: Open Society Institute & United Nations Foundation: *Reconstructing Iraq: A Guide to the Issues*, 30 May 2003, [http://www.soros.org/dc/reconstructing\\_iraq.htm](http://www.soros.org/dc/reconstructing_iraq.htm) and International Crisis Group: *Governing Iraq*, 25 August 2003, <http://www.intl-crisis-group.org/projects/showreport.cfm?reportid=1098>.

<sup>70</sup> Interview, 15 August 2003.

Interim Media Commission should be established to regulate complaints procedures, potential risks of censorship and to establish the basis for a public service broadcaster. This would remove the absolute authority of the IMN and establish more transparency and confidence in media authorities.

Thirdly, the crystallisation of these new strategies should be seen in a *legal framework*. Up to now, the only regulation for media has been a seven point order by the CPA, which forbids, but does not clearly define, all forms of incitement to violence, preaching for the return of the Baath party and the publication of false material to oppose the CPA and processes of self-government<sup>71</sup>. Even the CPA has not abused its power over the Iraqi media, as only two newspapers and one radio station have been closed, fear of censorship has remained, especially after the mistreatment and deaths of foreign journalists<sup>72</sup>. In June, M. Haselock submitted to Paul Bremer, the Civil Administrator, a detailed plan to establish an Interim Media Commission, which would regulate Iraqi media independently from the CPA, military forces or the Iraqi Governing Council. Another proposal, and a full interim law, had already been drafted by Iraqis and NGO media professionals and presented to the CPA but it has never been implemented<sup>73</sup>. Such a legal framework would be essential in clarifying the role of the CPA, and in establishing independent bodies that can grant and protect journalists. Guaranteeing freedom of expression and institutionalising it through legal and administrative bodies is crucial to assess future liberalisation in Iraq and the creation of sound foundations for democracy.

---

<sup>71</sup>Coalition Provisional Authority Order Number 14: Prohibited Media Activity, 10 June 2003, <http://www.cpa-iraq.org/regulations/index.html>.

<sup>72</sup>International Federation of Journalists (IFJ): *IFJ protests over Baghdad arrest of journalists and questions coalition media strategy*, 10 June 2003, <http://www.ifj.org/default.asp?index=1665&Language=EN> and Electronic Iraq: *IFEX [International Freedom of Expression eXchange] members raise fear over censorship regulations*, 20 June 2003, <http://electroniciraq.net/news/913.shtml>.

<sup>73</sup>Internews, a media development NGO, the UN, the World Bank and representatives of the US, Greece, Germany and Russia met in Athens in June a group of exiled Iraqi media professionals (among whom Hamid Ali Alkifaey a London based journalist and producer) and NGO professionals to propose an interim media framework for Iraq. This framework included a draft of an interim media law and transition strategies to promote and protect freedom of expression in a democratic society. See [http://www.internews.fr/iraq\\_media\\_conference/](http://www.internews.fr/iraq_media_conference/).

These top-down requirements from the authorities in power are complementary to the bottom-up achievements of the civil society media. Laws and the rule of law are often referred to as the enabling environment for the media. Without such an environment, media actors may refrain from expressing their views, because independence can threaten their position. From the perspective of civil society, there is a strong need to promote Iraqi professional bodies (journalists' associations), training centres and increased professionalisation among journalists. Such structures could allow for a greater awareness of the role of the media in the political process, of the social responsibility media professionals bear, and the importance of journalistic standards and codes of conduct<sup>74</sup>.

Such changes are essential to bringing short term and long term developments of media after a conflict, and to prevent the media from being used for further instability and violence. This would allow for the media to become a responsible and independent actor of democratisation. The media could then work in its watchdog function and provide free information flows that are essential to a functioning and sound democracy.

---

<sup>74</sup> *A New Voice in the Middle East: A Provisional Needs Assessment for the Iraqi Media*, op.cit., p.2.

**Conclusion**

From a promise of democracy to a real democracy, the road of change in the New Iraq is a long process. As the successes and failures of American military and political policies have affected the Iraqis, time has come for more attention to be paid to the potential role the Iraqis have to change life in their country. Democracy does not seem to flourish easily in a country that has never experienced it fully, which is under the control of foreign forces and whose former dictator still pulls the strings of destruction and unrest. Even though the Iraqis have had little gains up to now, the future remains full of hope, because it offers opportunities.

Political liberalisation is one of these opportunities. New rights and their protection seem to be essential gains for the New Iraq. For these rights mean a new life, removed from the fear of repression, but bringing different fears. Even if war and chaos have been the most visible signs of change, forces essential to building a democratic political system are now present in Iraq. They may not be in the hands of the key actors, but they benefit from the momentum created by the collapse of the Baath regime there. Invisible ideas, debates that end in the wind, the energy to speak in public are the small crumbs of political culture, values and behaviour that go along with democratic institutions. These small pieces of liberty in the necessary environment create the bricks for liberalisation and democratisation.

The media is one of these bricks. Its current position may be a weak one, monopolised by powerful actors in order to represent their interest, but it bears a lot of potential for democracy. Its simple presence is a sign of change. It can inform, offer a voice, denounce, make people laugh, but it does not stay neutral. The media can mean active participation of the civil society in debates that affect decision-making processes. It can mean the representation of neglected interests. Its position, role and potential remain conditioned by

the larger environment and strategies of most political actors. However, with the involvement of the civil society actors seeking to benefit public interest, a new role could be given to independent media. Maybe independent media cannot improve security on the streets of Baghdad, but it can prevent manipulation, change perceptions, denounce abuses or give a voice to the silent majority of the Iraqis.

Currently, independent media seems to be an endangered species because of the lack of improvement in the general environment. However, thanks to the willingness of individuals and the activity of Iraqi and foreign organisations, the Iraqi independent media is surviving. Its position needs to be strengthened from two perspectives. Firstly, independent media in the New Iraq should be supported and strengthened by the international aid donor community for the pacifying role it can achieve in the country. By providing training, finances or improving distribution and broadcast networks, the means for enhancing the chances for these media outlets to reach out to Iraqis would increase and so would their role in political change. Secondly, as mentioned above, the relevant legal and administrative framework needs to be established to protect new rights of expression. In the long term, these changes are essential in strengthening democratic institutions through the media.

The struggle of independent media by grassroots movements shows the potential and the need to establish democracy from within Iraq and to involve the Iraqi civil society. Using forces of civil society, that have a strong commitment to participation, representation and the protection of individual and community rights, is a means of establishing the foundations of an indigenous form of Iraqi democracy. The role of political and religious parties is, of course, important, but it is complementary to the involvement of ordinary Iraqis. Such an involvement needs to go beyond putting a vote into a ballot box. It involves associations that

act as a buffer between the individual and powerful actors. Without such actors, the doors for rivalries, power, manipulation, patronage remain open. If things were to remain unchanged, “regime change” and the establishment of democracy in Iraq might simply be a cosmetic transformation of the region’s political landscape.

Due the deterioration of living conditions, continuous violence and tragic bombings, the United States and its junior allies are currently reviewing their position and aims in Iraq. The failures of strategy planning, communication with the Iraqis, and in transforming a military invasion into a peacekeeping operation, can still be addressed by the participation of new actors. However, the debates regarding the further involvement of the United Nations and its members should not overshadow the crucial need to involve first and foremost the Iraqis themselves in the reconstruction of their country. The international community has a crucial role to play in providing short-term needs and taking responsibility for the plight of the Iraqis. Nonetheless, it is the Iraqis and their new government who should have the main role in governing themselves towards democracy.

Strengthening the public sphere, building consensus and sustaining dialogue are essential features for increased participation of the Iraqis in this political process. For this, independent media is an essential and already available mean for the Iraqis to grasp the way for changing the situation, undermining further tensions and violence and living a more normal life. The Iraqis need to be woken up from the nightmare of living each day without any hope for tomorrow. It is time for them to dream about tomorrow, when they can wake up, read their newspapers in front of a cup of tea and listen to the radio when taking their children to school.

**List of Abbreviations:**

BBC: British Broadcasting Corporation

CPA: Coalition Provisional Authority

KDP: Kurdish Democratic Party

IMN: Iraqi Media Network

NGO: Non-Governmental Organisation

PUK: Patriotic Union of Kurdistan

UN: United Nations

**Bibliography:****I. Documentary sources:**Amnesty International

*Iraq: Memorandum on concerns relating to law and order*, 23 July 2003,  
<http://web.amnesty.org/library/Index/ENGMDE141572003>.

BBC World Service Trust

*The Current State of the Broadcast Media in Iraq*, Media Audit, April-June 2003,  
[www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/trust](http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/trust)

Coalition Provisional Authority

*Authority Order 14: Prohibited Media Activity*, 10 June 2003, [www.cpa-iraq.org](http://www.cpa-iraq.org)

Index on Censorship

Jayasekera, Rohan: *Iraq: US military and free speech*, 11 June 2003,  
[http://www.indexonline.org/news/20030611\\_iraq.shtml](http://www.indexonline.org/news/20030611_iraq.shtml)

*Iraq: Al-Jazeera and free expression. Shooting the messenger*, 3 April 2003,  
<http://foi.missouri.edu/jourwarcoverage/iraqaljazeera.html>

*Struggling for Independent Media in Occupied Iraq*, 30 May 2003,  
<http://www.citizenlab.org/modules.php?op=modload&name=News&file=article&sid=297>

Institute for Media, Policy and Civil Society (IMPACS)

*The Media and Peacebuilding, a roundtable consultation*, Vancouver: IMPACS, 1999

Howard, Ross: *The Media's role in war and Peacebuilding*, paper presented at a Seminar organised by the Working Group on Civil Society and the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, 2003, [www.impacs.org](http://www.impacs.org)

*An Operational Framework for Media and Peacebuilding*, Vancouver: Institute for Media, Policy and Civil Society, 2002, [www.impacs.org](http://www.impacs.org)

Institute for War & Peace Reporting (IPWR)

*A New Voice in the Middle East: A Provisional Needs Assessment for the Iraqi Media*.

Joint Report by the Baltic Media Centre, Index on Censorship, IPWR, International Media Support, May-June 2003, [www.i-m-s.dk](http://www.i-m-s.dk)

*Media Development in Post-war Iraq Report*, Report of a Conference organised by the International Media Support, Baltic Media Centre, Index on Censorship, Institute for War & Peace Reporting (IPWR), London, April 2003,  
[http://www.iwpr.net/iraq\\_Media\\_in\\_Iraq\\_Meeting.html](http://www.iwpr.net/iraq_Media_in_Iraq_Meeting.html)

International Crisis Group

*Governing Iraq*, 25 August 2003,

<http://www.intl-crisis-group.org/projects/showreport.cfm?reportid=1098>

International Federation of Journalists (IFJ)

*IFJ protests over Baghdad arrest of journalists and questions coalition media strategy*, 10 June 2003, <http://www.ifj.org/default.asp?index=1665&Language=EN>

Internews

*Framework for change: Transforming Iraq's Media Landscape & Draft of an Interim Media Law*, Report of a Conference of Experts on Democratic Media, Organised by Internews, the United Nations, Greece, Germany and Russia: Athens, June 2003,

[http://www.internews.fr/iraq\\_media\\_conference/default.htm](http://www.internews.fr/iraq_media_conference/default.htm)

Open Society Institute & United Nations Foundation

*Reconstructing Iraq: A Guide to the Issues*, 30 May 2003,

[http://www.soros.org/dc/reconstructing\\_iraq.htm](http://www.soros.org/dc/reconstructing_iraq.htm).

Swisspeace

Spurk, Christoph: *Media and Peacebuilding: Actors, Concepts and Challenges*, 2002,

[www.swisspeace.org](http://www.swisspeace.org)

Reporters without Borders

*The Iraqi media, three months after the war*, 22 July 2003,

[http://www.rsf.org/article.php3?id\\_article=7583](http://www.rsf.org/article.php3?id_article=7583)

Cazes, Séverine: *The Iraqi Media: 25 years of relentless repression*, Paris: Reporters without Borders, 2003, <http://www.rsf.org>

The Netherlands Association of Journalists

*The role of the Media in Conflict Prevention and Peace Building*, Report of a Seminar

commissioned by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, 2002, [www.impacs.org](http://www.impacs.org)

United Nations Programme for Development

*Arab Human Development Report 2002*, <http://www.undp.org/rbas/ahdr/> .

United States Agency for International Development

*The role of media in democracy: a strategic approach*, Centre for Democracy and Governance, 1999, [www.usaid.gov](http://www.usaid.gov)

*The enabling environment for free and independent media*, Occasional Papers Series, Office of Democracy and Governance, 2002, [www.usaid.gov](http://www.usaid.gov)

## **II. Books:**

Ayubi, Nazih: *Over-Stating the Arab State*, London & New York: I.B. Tauris, 1995.

Brynen, Rex; Korany, Bahgat & Noble Paul (eds): *Political Liberalization & Democratization in the Arab World*, Vol.1, Boulder- London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1995

Butenschon, Nils; Davis, Uri; Hassassian, Manuel (eds): *Citizenship and the State in the Middle East*, Syracuse NY: Syracuse University Press, 2000.

Curran, James & Park, Myung-Jin (eds): *De-Westernizing Media Studies*, London & New York: Routledge, 2000.

El-Nawawy, Mohammed & Iskandar, Adel: *Al-Jazeera*, Cambridge MA: Westview, 2002

Glasius Marlies, Kaldor Mary, Anheier Helmut (eds): *Global Society Yearbook 2001 & 2002*, Centre for Civil Society, London School of Economics  
<http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/CCS/publications/Default.htm>

Hopwood D., Ishow H.& Koszinowski T. (eds): *Iraq: Power and Society*, Oxford: Ithaca Press, 1993

Kamalipour, Yahya R.: *The U.S. Media and the Middle East*, Westport: Greenwood Press, 1995

Kaviraj, Sudipta & Khilnami, Sunil (eds): *Civil Society: Histories and Possibilities*, Cambridge: CUP, 2001.

Norton, Augustus Richard (ed): *Civil Society in the Middle East*, Vol. 1, Leiden, New York & Köln: E. J. Brill, 1995

Owen, Roger: *State, Power and Politics in the Making of the Modern Middle East*, London & New York: Routledge, 2000.

Özdalga, Elisabeth & Persson, Sune (eds): *Civil Society, Democracy and the Muslim World*, Istanbul: Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul, 1997

Parry, Geraint & Mooran Michael (eds): *Democracy and Democratization*, London & New York: Routledge, 1994.

Randall, Vicky (ed): *Democratization and the Media*, London & Portland-OR: Frank Cass, 1998

Rugh, William A.: *The Arab Press*, Syracuse-NY: Syracuse University Press, 1987.

Saikal, Amin & Schnabel Albrecht (eds): *Democratization in the Middle East*, Tokyo-New York-Paris: United Nations University Press, 2003

Shaw, Martin: *Civil Society and Media in Global Crises*, London: Pinter 1996

Street, John: *Mass Media, Politics and Democracy*: New York: Palgrave, 2001

Wolfsfeld, Gadi: *Media and Political conflict: News from the Middle East*, Cambridge: CUP, 1997

### **III. Periodicals:**

#### Activate

Howard, Ross: *Media and Peacebuilding: Mapping the possibilities*, winter 2001, [www.impacs.org](http://www.impacs.org)

#### Columbia Journalism Review:

Dargahi, Borzou : *Rebuilding Iraq's Media*, July/August 2003, <http://www.cjr.org>

#### Conflict Prevention Newsletter

Havermans, Jos: *Better Media, Less Conflict*, Vol1. No2, 1998

#### International Journal of Middle East Studies

Baram, Amatzia: *Neo-Tribalism in Iraq: Saddam Hussein's Tribal Policies 1991-96*, Vol.1, issue 29, February 1997

#### Political Science and Politics

Page, Benjamin: *The Mass Media as Political Actors*, Vol. 29, Issue 1, March 1996

### **IV Newspapers:**

#### Al-Muajaha

Jarrar, Majid: *Every Man a sheikh- inside the FIF & INC*, 19 May 2003, ,  
*You should thank us for keeping you alive*, 1 June 2003, [www.almuajaha.com](http://www.almuajaha.com)

Mohammed, Hamsa: *A new kind of democracy*, 19 May 2003, [www.almuajaha.com](http://www.almuajaha.com)

Waleed, M. Rabi'a: *Committee for Free Prisoners Seeks to Help Iraqis Find Missing Relatives*, 19 May 2003, <http://www.almuajaha.com>

#### Christian Science Monitor

Chaddock, Gail Russell: *Cultural Regime Change: New Pro-American Textbooks on their way to Iraqi Schools*, , 21 April 2003,  
[http://abcnews.go.com/sections/world/CSM/culture\\_030421\\_csm.html](http://abcnews.go.com/sections/world/CSM/culture_030421_csm.html)

Electronic Iraq

IFEX [International Freedom of Expression eXchange] members raise fear over censorship regulations, 20 June 2003, <http://electroniciraq.net/news/913.shtml>

King-Irani, Laurie: *How do you spell democracy in Arabic? D-i-g-n-i-t-y*, 19 May 2003, <http://electroniciraq.net/news/810.shtml>

Inter Press Service

Janardhan, N.: *Turning in to the Middle East*, , 2 January 2003, <http://www.gvnews.net/html/DailyNews/alert3252.html>

New York Times

*Why Al Jazeera Matters*, 31.3.03, [www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com)

Oppel, Richard A. Jr.: *Iraqis get the news but often don't believe it*, 5 August 2003, [www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com)

Open democracy

Zubaida, Sami: *The rise and fall of civil society in Iraq*, February 2003 [www.opendemocracy.net/debates/article-2-88-953.jsp](http://www.opendemocracy.net/debates/article-2-88-953.jsp)

Khoury-Machool, Makram: *Losing the battle for Arab hearts and minds*, 2 May 2003, <http://www.opendemocracy.net/debates/article-8-92-1202.jsp>

Le Monde

Claude, Patrice: *En pleine reconstruction, les médias publics irakiens souffrent de la faiblesse de leurs moyens*, 10 July 2003, [www.lemonde.fr](http://www.lemonde.fr)  
*Radios et journaux de Bagdad répercutent les rumeurs les plus folles*, 10 July 2003, [www.lemonde.fr](http://www.lemonde.fr)

Global Vision Network/Pacific News Service

Khouri, Rami G.: *Madonna meets Osama- New Arab Media and its Discontents*, 6.12.02, [www.gvnews.net/html/Opinion/alert789.html](http://www.gvnews.net/html/Opinion/alert789.html)

Reuters

Hafidh, Hassan: *Post-Saddam Media Boom enjoys Freedom—to a Point*, 23 June 2003, <http://asia.reuters.com>

Salon

Goldberg Michelle: *Baghdad Chronicles*, 24 May 2003, [http://www.salon.com/news/feature/2003/05/24/iraq\\_news/index\\_np.html](http://www.salon.com/news/feature/2003/05/24/iraq_news/index_np.html)

Smyth, Frank: *The Price of Propaganda*, 21 March 2003,  
<http://www.tompaine.com/feature.cfm/ID/5294>

Slate:

Plotz, David: *Smarter Bombs, Smarter Democracy?*, 22 April 2003, <http://slate.msn.com/Democracy-Faster, Better, Smarter>, 25 April 2003, <http://slate.msn.com/Law and Order: Special Iraq Unit>, 30 April 2003, <http://slate.msn.com/Iraq's Civil War>, 2 May 2003, <http://slate.msn.com/>

The Guardian

Deans, Jason: *Al-Jazeera's chief executive steps down*, Special Reports, 27 May 2003,  
<http://media.guardian.co.uk/tvnewsbattleofthebulletins/story/0,7521,964362,00.html>

Pax, Salam: *Baghdad Blogger*, 4 June 2003

Whitaker, Brian: *Getting a bad press*, 23 June 2003

The Observer

Alkifaey, Hamid Ali: *A free media for a democratic Iraq: an Iraqi media revolution can change the Arab World*, 4 May, 2003  
<http://observer.guardian.co.uk/comment/story/0,6903,949405,00.html>

The Toronto Star

Zerbisias, Antonia: *Iraqi democracy means a free press*, 18 May 2003,  
<http://www.thestar.com>

The Washington Institute

Knights, Michael: *The role of Broadcast media in influence operations in Iraq*, Policywatch No 758, 19 May 2003,  
<http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/watch/Policywatch/policywatch2003/758.htm>

The Washington Post

Borden, Anthony (IPWR): *Media: Help Them Create a BBC of their Own*, 11 April 2003,  
<http://www.washingtonpost.com/ac2/wp-dyn?pagename=article&node=&contentId=A11139-2003Apr11&notFound=true>

DeYoung, Karen & Pincus, Walter: *US to take its message to Iraqi Airwaves*, 11 May 2003,  
<http://www.washingtonpost.com>

Pincus, Walter: *US General May Censor Iraqi TV Station's Programs*, 9 May 2003,  
<http://www.washingtonpost.com>

**V. Interview:**

Jayasekera, Rohan: Web Editor, Index on Censorship, 15 August 2003, London  
M. Jayasekera visited Iraq in May as part of Index on Censorship's contribution to a combined survey of the Iraqi media. He is also currently developing training programmes for the independent Iraqi media to run during 2003.